

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11
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FM AMEMBASSY PRETORIA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2425
INFO AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN
AMCONSUL DURBAN
AMCONSUL JOHANNESBURG

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE PRETORIA 5247

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PINT, SF
SUBJECT: TRANSVAAL PROGRESSIVE FEDERAL PARTY CONGRESS
THIS WEEK

1. PROGRESSIVE FEDERAL PARTY (PFP) SOURCES
HAVE TOLD EMBOFFS THAT THE FRANCHISE QUESTION IS EXPECTED
TO BE THE MOST IMPORTANT ISSUE DEBATED IN THE TRANSVAAL
PFP CONGRESS WHICH TAKES PLACE ON SEPTEMBER 8 AND 9 IN
PRETORIA. THE PFP TRANSVAAL CHAIRMAN, PIET VERMEULEN, TOLD
EMBOFF THAT THE PARTY'S VAN ZYL SLABBERT COMMISSION CHARGED
WITH REVIEWING THE PFP'S CONSTITUTIONAL POLICY IS EXPECTED
TO MAKE ITS OFFICIAL RECOMMENDATIONS ON THE FRANCHISE
QUESTION TO THE NATIONAL PARTY CONGRESS IN NOVEMBER, BUT
THE CAPE AND NATAL CONGRESSES AS WELL AS THE PFP NATIONAL
YOUTH CONCIL HAVE ALREADY URGED ACCEPTANCE OF AN EQUAL
VOTE FOR ALL SOUTH AFRICANS.

2. THE YOUTH COUNCIL RESOLUTION ASKS THE SLABBERT COMMITTEE
TO CONSIDER "A CONSTITUTIONAL SYSTEM IN WHICH EVERY
PERSON HAS AN EQUAL VOTE IN A NON-ETHNIC FEDERAL
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SYSTEM." YOUTH COUNCIL CHAIRMAN, IAN DAVIDSON, WAS
REPORTED TO HAVE SAID THAT THE COUNCIL AVOIDED DESCRIBING
ITS POSITION AS "ONE MAN, ONE VOTE" BECAUSE "THE TERM IS
TOO EMOTIVE AND IGNORES THE CONSTITUTIONAL SYSTEM IN
WHICH WE WOULD LIKE IT TO BE CARRIED OUT."

3. IN RESPONSE TO THE COUNCIL'S RESOLUTION, HARRY

SCHWARZ, MP AND CHAIRMAN OF THE PARTY'S FEDERAL EXECUTIVE, REPORTEDLY PLEDGED CONTINUED PFP SUPPORT FOR A QUALIFIED FRANCHISE AND WAS SAID TO HAVE LINKED HIS REJECTION OF EQUAL FRANCHISE TO "THE SURVIVAL OF THE WHITE MAN." HE WAS QUOTED AS STATING HE BELIEVED IN "CONSOCIATIONAL DEMOCRACY," A CONFEDERATION IN WHICH ALL PARTICIPATING GROUPS WOULD HAVE A RIGHT OF VETO OVER DECISIONS TAKEN.

4. VERMEULEN DESCRIBED THESE DIFFERENCES AS "HEALTHY DEBATE WITHIN THE PARTY." MORE OF THE SAME APPARENTLY WILL TAKE PLACE ON THE MORNING OF SEPTEMBER 9 WHEN THE FRANCHISE QUESTION IS DISCUSSED. ONE NEWSPAPER REPORTED THE CONGRESS WOULD LIKELY PROVIDE THE MOST OPEN DEBATE YET ON THE UNQUALIFIED FRANCHISE QUESTION. ACCORDING TO PRESS REPORTS, AT LEAST EIGHT DELEGATIONS WILL ASK THAT THE PARTY COMMIT ITSELF TO UNIVERSAL FRANCHISE WHILE FIVE OTHERS WILL REJECT THE IDEA OUTRIGHT. TWO REPORTED RESOLUTIONS INCLUDE ONE WHICH WOULD CALL ON THE PFP TO ELIMINATE ALL REFERENCES TO GROUP RIGHTS FROM ITS POLICY, AND ANOTHER WHICH WANTS FULL ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF GROUP IDENTITY.

5. EMBASSY POLOFFS WILL BE ATTENDING THE CONGRESS SEPTEMBER 9 AS INVITED OBSERVERS.
EDMONDSON

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Message Attributes

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